



# ***Teacher's Notes***

*Written by Kim Ngareta Kearny*

## **Story Summary**

Weaving a beautiful narrative of heritage, culture and the enduring strength of family bonds, *The Lost Words* is a daughter's account of her mother's journey through the rich tapestry of te reo Māori.

My Mum is collecting words.  
You see, a long time ago,  
lots of the words were left out or replaced.  
Slowly they were forgotten.

A powerful and moving story that will appeal to young readers and adults alike.

---

## **Author Biography**

### **Kimberley Ngareta Kearney (Author)**



Kimberley Ngareta Kearney (Ngāti Maniapoto, Tūhoe) spent many years as a primary school teacher where she developed a love for sharing stories with young minds. Embarking on a journey to re-indigenise her whānau and reclaim the language that was lost generations before, Kim was inspired to write *The Lost Words* as a tribute to her and many others' rediscovered treasure, te reo Māori.

### **Taylor Terewai Tiave (Illustrator)**



Taylor Terewai Tiave (Ngāpuhi) was raised in California and now lives in beautiful Hawai'i, creating stunning art. She visits Aotearoa as often as she can and has whānau to visit, sharing waiata and pūrākau to nourish her roots to te ao Māori.

## **Glossary**

**[www.hachette.co.nz/news/the-lost-words-glossary](http://www.hachette.co.nz/news/the-lost-words-glossary)**

---

### **Suggested Shared Reading Questions**

Cover prediction – What are some ways that words could get lost?

Where could you look for lost words?

- Spread 1 – Where does Mum keep the words that she's collecting?
- Spread 2 – What kind of words is Mum collecting?
- Spread 3 – Who do the words that Mum is collecting belong to?
- Spread 4 – What are they doing in the picture? Where might they be? What kinds of words would you hear there?
- Spread 5 – What are the English words for the fruits and vegetables in the picture? Have you eaten all of these things?
- Spread 6 – What happened to the words? Why might they have been forgotten? What kind of bird is in the picture?
- Spread 7 – Can you think of another taonga?
- Spread 8 – Why might it take Mum a long time to find her lost words?
- Spread 9 – What is the girl going to do with the words?  
Why is it important to her?
- Spread 10/11 – Who will hear and use the words that the girl learns from Mum?

## ***Suggested Activities for emergent readers and writers***

# **Our Names**

Our names are often the most familiar words to us. Use the book as an entry to practice name recognition and writing. Emergent writers could make themselves a name tag for their desk or tote tray and decorate it with images of their favourite things.

# **Word Bank**

Make a group or class word bank of all of the students favourite words aligning it with other reading/writing work you are completing for the week e.g. initial sounds. Do the same words appear several times? Is there a theme emerging of common interests amongst the group?

## ***Suggested Activities for early readers and writers***

# ***Kete Weaving***

Is there a weaver within your school community that can come in and work with your students to prepare flax and begin some weaving practice for fine motor dexterity for your beginner writers? This could be done with paper to make a small pocket/pouch for them to put some favourite words into, or to put their spelling words for the week/term into.

# ***Word Search***

Take a walk around the school and 'collect' all of the words you find on labels and signs. Can the students guess which words are more important based on the font, size, and colour of the letters?

# ***Kia kaha, kia māia, kia manawanui - Be strong, be brave, be steadfast***

What does this whakataukī mean to the students? Ask them to illustrate a time they needed these traits, or a time they might need them.

## ***Suggested Activities for early readers and writers***

# ***My mum's favourite word***

Ask the students to collect a favourite word from their mum, or significant adult, and bring it into school to share with the group. Are there common words or themes?

## ***Word kākahu***

In *The Lost Words* the girl describes her mum's words covering her like a beautiful kākahu (cloak). Make a student-sized kākahu and cover it with words of affirmation and support for anyone in the classroom to wear when they need it.